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ABSTRACT

A survey of male and female school administrators in Pennsylvania reveals that sexual division of labor in household activities differs little from stereotypical role expectations. A survey, mailed to 1,324 male and female administrative incumbents and aspirants, yielded 622 responses for a rate of 47 percent. The survey explored personal characteristics, career pathways, and strategies. Researchers developed the following question: Do hours per week spent by self, by one's partner, or by others on job/career, child care, cleaning house, family finance, food shopping/meal preparation, laundry, outdoor chores, and parental care differ by gender, age, incumbent-aspirant position, children's ages, marital status, partner's occupation, and gender/certificate level? Both genders spend equivalent time on careers, but findings show that women worker longer weeks. Unsurprisingly, these women indicate insufficient time and child care as barriers to career advancement; female incumbents are less likely to have children under 18 than male counterparts. Men spend more time on outdoor chores and women devote more time to household tasks and parental care, even in two-career families. Single person households are mostly headed by women who spend less time on careers and more on household chores than average. As a result of the study it is recommended that school districts take action in three areas (curricula, provision of child care, and job restructuring) in order to provide equitable opportunities for women to become administrators. (CJH)

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Sex Role Stereotyping for Household Chores By Aspiring and Incumbent Female and Male Public School Administrators

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Paper presented at The
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Abstract

Public school educators reported spending an average of 52 hours per week on their careers regardless of gender. Their contributions to household responsibilities of child care and family finance were about equal, but other chores were split on the traditional male-female role patterns. Men spent more time on outdoor chores while the women spent more time on cleaning, cooking, laundering, and parental care. Even in two-career families, wives are spending more hours per week on household tasks than men do which means a longer work week for women. The women's partners (mostly husbands) were much more likely to have full-time jobs than the men's partners (mostly wives) and therefore the wives contributed many more hours to household responsibilities. Single person households were mostly headed by women who spent less time on their careers and more time on household tasks than the average respondent. Recommendations were made for school district policies in order to provide more equitable opportunities for women to become school administrators.

Sex Role Stereotyping for Household Chores By Aspiring and Incumbent Female and Male Public School Administrators

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Objective

To determine if the division of labor for household activities such as child or aging parental care, cleaning, finances, food preparation, laundry, and outdoor chores is by sex role stereotypes in two-career families, one-career families and single person households.

Perspective

The division of labor in traditional families has been the man as "bread winner," financial planner, and overseer of outdoor chores with the woman responsible for all indoor household activities especially child care, cleaning, and meal preparation. An increasing proportion of women are now employed full-time outside the home. Societal attitudes, especially concerning home and family roles, appear to be changing more slowly than the new economic or career responsibilities being undertaken by women.

A survey of female school administrators by Rometo (1982) indicated that these women spent 5 to 20 hours on household duties, and that the 22% with children spent about 5 to 20 hours with them weekly. The female administrator spent approximately 13 hours per week of their personal time on household duties. Only 36% had paid household help with 6 hours per week the average. Data on spouses and male administrators was not sought.

A Gallup survey of female business executives in the Wall Street Journal (1984) reported on how family responsibilities were shared and devised a family burden scale to measure how much the domestic responsibility is carried by executive women. The female executive had complete responsibility for paying bills (54%), laundry (52%), meals (47%), investments (24%), children's clothes shopping (70%), children's activities (37%), when children home ill (30%), and child discipline (13%). The husband was responsible for paying bills (21%), and investments (15%) with other chores mentioned above 8% or less. Chores were shared in the rest of the households.

Method

The appropriate certificate is required for employment as a school administrator in Pennsylvania. Records of names and certificates received is public information, as is the present employment position of all those in Pennsylvania school districts. The certification records contain names and certificates issued. This data source was bumped into the base of individuals currently employed in the public schools which includes individual names, current assignments, and work location addresses.

The incumbent school administrator sample consisted of the total population of female superintendents (N=19), assistant superintendents (N=14), and secondary principals (N=29) plus a random sample of 100 female elementary principals. Random samples of 100 men per position were also drawn.

The aspiring school administrator sample consisted of 100 men and 100 women for each position randomly drawn from those employed in Pennsylvania holding the required certificate but not yet employed in that position. Because administrative experience is required in addition to academic preparation, only 76 women held this superintendent certificate.

After removing the computer errors such as duplicates and inaccurate assignment to categories, a sample of 1,324 was available for the survey which was mailed October 1, 1985. The return of 622 yielded a response note of 47% with all categories adequately represented. Follow-up telephone calls to a small number of non respondents indicated that a number of surveys did not reach their destinations in addition to the 20 which were returned as address unknown or left district.

The four page survey instrument was designed for those in possession of administrative certificates whether or not currently employed as a school administrator. Appropriate categories were gleaned from an extensive literature review. Minor changes were made to improve the format and clarity of the directions after a pilot survey. In addition to personal characteristics the survey probed five areas: career pathways, job search strategies, time usage, mentors and their functions, and barriers experienced with strategies used to overcome them.

One measure of sex role attitudes is the amount of time spent by men and women on their jobs and on various household chores. Respondents were surveyed as to time spent weekly by themselves, their spouses, and others both paid and non-paid on

their jobs, child care, cleaning, family finance, food preparation, laundry, outdoor chores, and parental care. Also available for analysis was the occupation of both spouses, age of children in household, present marital status, and age of respondent.

To facilitate comparision with previous research, the following research question was developed:

Do the hours per week spent by self, by one's partner, or by others on their job, child care, cleaning house, family finance, food shopping and meal preparation, laundry, outdoor chores, and parental care differ by:

a. gender,

b. age,

c. incumbent-aspirant position,

d. age of children,

e. marital status,

f. or partner's occupation,

g. gender and certificate level.

Average hours per week were calculated for self, partner, and other for each of the eight activities. Analysis of variance with a .05 level of significance was used to determine the relationships between the variables listed above. Due to small numbers analysis of variance was not calculated for other household help.

Sample Characteristics

Table 1 summarizes selected sample characteristics for the total sample and the 16 subgroups. Nearly all the respondents were white with only 5.8% of the respondents noting race as black and none in any other category. While this percentage is low it is near the state-wide figure of 6.3%. Average age of total sample is 44.79. Analysis of variance between the 16 groups yields an F ratio of 5.741 with probability of 0.000. As might be expected the aspirants are younger than the incumbents. Differences in marital or paired status were by sex with males much more likely to be coupled. A raw chi square of 61.28591 with 15 degrees of freedom was significant at the 0.0000 level. Over 81% of the sample were paired with percentages in female subgroups from 54 to 72 and in male groups from 80 to 98. Men were more likely to be paired than women.

The state of Pennsylvania classifies school districts according to size. Class 1 is districts with over 350,000 students and contains only Philadelphia and Pittsburgh. There are 70 districts in class 2 with 30,000 or more students. Class 3 contains 396 districts with student populations of 5,000 to 29,999 and the remaining 33 smaller districts are Class 4. Table 1 indicates percentage of respondents for each sub-population in varying district size classes.

The data on the children in the respondents' families are presented in Table 2. Only 17% of the respondents have children under 6, 23% have children between 6 and 11 years of age, while 31% have children 12 to 17 years old. Data were not tabulated on

grown children over 18 for which child care would not be a factor. Note however, that in most cases a larger proportion of the male groups have children than the female groups.

Findings

The typical respondent (see Table 3) spent 13 hours per week on child care, 3 3/4 cleaning house, 2 1/2 on family finance, 5 on meal preparation, almost 2 on laundry, nearly 5 on outdoor chores, and over 2 on parental care. Since 33 hours per week were spent on these activities and 51 3/4 on job or career, the work week was nearly 85 hours. Their partners worked about the same numbers of hours with the split in the opposite direction; 36 hours on the job and 50 for the household. Only a small number of the 543 households used the help of others; over 50 had others to do child care, laundry, and outdoor chores with 154 obtaining an average of 8 hours of house cleaning help.

Gender Differences

Both male and female respondents spent nearly 52 hours per week on their career, but significant differences were found on 5 of the activities. (Table 4) Women reported spending more time per week than men reported on house cleaning (4.6 vs 3.1 hours), on meal preparation (7.3 vs. 3.3 hours), on laundry (2.8 vs. 1.4 hours) and parental care (3.7 vs 1.4 hours). Hours on outdoor chores were greater for men (6.0) than women (2.2).

A greater number of significant differences were obtained for these areas when the analysis was by partner and sex.

Husbands (47.3) worked more hours than wives (30.4) and spent more time on outdoor tasks (4.4) than wives (2.1). Wives, however, spent more time on child care (25.2 vs. 11.6 hours) house cleaning (11.5 vs 3.1), meal preparation (8.1 vs 4.6), and laundry (5.1 vs 1.4).

Only 12% of the men but 39% of the women reported employing cleaning help. While all percentages were small, a greater percentage of women than men obtained the assistance of others for each of the seven household tasks.

Age Differences

Significant differences by age were obtained for 5 factors on the administrative respondents. Job hours for those under 35 were 49.6, ages 36 to 45 were 50.8, and 46 plus were 53.2. Hours spent on the job increased as age increased, while child care hours increased as age decreased. The oldest respondents spent about 5 hours, the middle group about 15 hours, and those under 35 spent 23 hours per week on child care. The youngest also spent more time on laundry and meal preparation, while the oldest spent more time on outdoor chores. Differences in hours per week spent on career and household responsibilities are great with those under 35 working 91 hours per week; those 36 to 45, 85 hours; and those over 46, 79 hours.

The number of hours spent on 3 of the activities were significantly different for the partners by age. Child care differences for partners were the greatest with partners of those

under 35 spending 30 1/2 hours; those 36 to 45, 25 hours; and those over 46, 11 1/2 hours per week. Spouses of those between 36 and 45 spent fewer hours on outdoor chores and partners of the oldest group spent the most time caring for aging parents.

While only 10% of the respondents need others for child care: 23% of those under 35 use an average of 38 hours per week, 13% of those 36 to 45 need 23 hours per week, and those older need very little. Cleaning is done by others for 23% of the households for approximately 8 hours per week with the middle aged group most likely to do so.

Incumbent-Aspirant Differences

At the time of their responses, approximately one half of the respondents held the position of superintendent, assistant superintendent, elementary principal, or secondary principal and are referred to as incumbents. The aspirants held a variety of position such as administrative assistants, assistant principals, directors, coordinators, supervisors, and teachers.

Incumbents spent significantly more hours per week on their job (54.6) than aspirants (49.0) and on outdoor chores (5.3) than aspirants (4.1). Childcare occupied aspirants (16.5 hours) much more than incumbents (9.1 hours). Aspirants also spend more time on food preparation (5.6 vs 4.5 hours) and laundry (2.2 vs. 1.5) than do incumbents.

The partners of aspirants spend more time on their own job and childcare while incumbent's spouses spent more time on

house cleaning and laundry. No differences for usage of others was noted for aspirants or incumbents.

Age of Children

Respondents were divided into groups based on the age of their youngest child. The age categories reflect the amount of parental care needed. Preschoolers were those under six years of age. Ages 6 to 11 would be elementary students and those 12 to 17 would be secondary students. Children over 18 were considered with those who reported having no children.

As was expected the younger the child, the greater the hours per week spent on child care by the respondents: 32 hours on those under 6, 25 1/2 on those 6 to 11, and 12 hours on those 12 to 17 years old. Other significant differences (those with no children average a 1/2 hour more per week on laundry and those whose children are aged 12 to 17 spend an extra hour per week on outdoor chores) are of more statistical than practical relevance.

Partners usage of time is heavily influenced by children's age with 5 significant differences obtained. Those with children under 12 spend about 40 hours per week on child care with 21 hours needed for the 12 to 17 year olds. Cleaning up after the 6 to 17 year olds requires about 11 hours per week, but food preparation when children are under 6 averages 9 1/2 hours per week. Laundry takes 5 hours per week for 12 to 17 year olds and outdoor chores increase to 3 1/2 hours when there are no children.

The need for others when the children are young is most noticable for child care, but also for house cleaning. Only for meal preparation are others more likely to do the task when the children are grown.

Marital Status

The time spent in each of the 8 activities was influenced by marital status. (Table 5) For analysis those who checked "single, never married" and "separated, divorced, widowed" are classified as alone and together is "married," "remarried," and "paired," Only 19% of the group are alone with women much more likely than men to be in this category. Respondents with partners spend more hours per week on their career, child care, and outdoor chores. Those who are without partners spend more time on house cleaning, finance, food preparation, laundry, and parental care.

No one in the alone category had child care done by others, but a small number of those alone reported partners doing so. This would indicate a sharing of child care responsibilities after divorce or separation.

Partner's Occupation

Respondents were asked to write in the occupation of their partner. These were than coded as education, professional, manager, white collar, blue collar, home, and own business. Significant differences were obtained for 4 variables with two occupations appearing to be the influence. Respondents whose

spouses were blue collar workers spent much more time cleaning house, preparing the meals, and doing the laundry. The spouses of full time homemakers spent more time on family finance and almost none on the laundry, but did not differ much on the other variables.

When the partner was the homemaker, the partner spent significantly more time on child care (38 hours), cleaning house (19 hours), finance (4.8 hours), food preparation (10.7 hours), and laundry (7 hours) than partners with any other occupation, and less time working at an outside job (8.4 hours).

Gender and Certificate Level Differences

Significant differences between the 4 certificate groups (superintendent, assistant superintendent, elementary or secondary principal) subdivided according to gender and aspirant-incumbent status were found on all factors except finance. Certain groups spend considerably more time than the average on some of these other activities. Partners and other are needed for many of these tasks.

Superintendent. Incumbent superintendents who are women spend more time on their job (59 hours), child care (13 hours), meal preparation (6.6 hours), and laundry (2.1 hours) while men spend time on their job (58 hours) and outdoor chores (6.3 hours). Aspiring superintendents who are women are high on meal preparation (7.2 hours), laundry (2.4 hours) and parental care (6.3 hours) while men are high only on outdoor chores (5.4 hours).

Partners of the superintendent certificate holders contribute to the household. The aspiring female's spouse spends the most hours on a career. Child care is provided to the greatest extent by the partners of incumbent women and aspiring men. Wives are more likely than husbands to do the cleaning, cooking and laundry, but husbands do the outdoor chores.

Assistant Superintendents. The incumbent female assistant superintendent spends the most hours (58) on the job. All but incumbent men are heavily involved with child care. Women both aspiring and incumbent clean, cook, and do laundry with men handling the outdoor chores. Only the aspiring female assistant superintendent spends many hours with aging parents.

The partners of the women work much longer hours than those of the men on average i.e., more wives than husbands are full time homemakers. Greatest child care hours are spent by wives of aspiring male assistant superintendents. Wives are much more likely than husbands to clean, cook, and do laundry with husbands doing outdoor chores.

Elementary principal. Aspirants of both genders handle the child care with women cleaning, cooking and doing laundry while the men do the outdoor chores. Incumbent female principals spend the most time caring for parents.

The husbands work longer hours than the wives. Child care, cooking, cleaning, and laundry are preformed by wives and outdoor chores by husbands.

Secondary principal. The incumbent female secondary principal spends the most hours (58.1) on her job. Aspirants both men and women are responsible for child care. Meals and laundry are done by women with men doing the outdoor chores. Cleaning is the responsibility of the aspiring women.

The male partners of secondary principals work longer hours than the female partners. Wives of aspirants contribute the most to child care. In general wives clean, cook and do laundry with husbands doing outdoor chores. The partner of the incumbent female secondary principal is much more likely to assist in cleaning and laundry than other partners.

Discussion

All the respondents in this study worked in public schools as professional educators with jobs ranging from teacher to superintendent and worked an average of 52 hours per week. Their contributions to household responsibilities of child care and family finance were about equal, but other chores were split on the traditional male-female role patterns. Men spent more time on outdoor chores while the women spent more time on cleaning, cooking, laundering, and parental care.

The women's partners (mostly husbands) were much more likely to have full-time jobs than the men's partners (mostly wives) and therefore the wives contributed many more hours to household responsibilities such as child care, cleaning, cooking and laundry than husbands. Only 12% of the men, but 39% of the women reported having additional assistance for house cleaning.

In other words, even in two-career households, wives are spending more hours per week on household tasks than men for the traditional tasks of cleaning, cooking, and laundry while men do the outdoor chores.

As unexpected finding was that family finance was split with approximately equal time spent on this task by both genders. A previous study (Rogan, 1984) noted that female executives were more likely to handle the bill payments than the investments for the household, so the results might have differed if this item had been split.

The biggest surprise was that the working man and woman spent approximately equal amounts of time with their children. Actual hours per week differed for men (12) and women (14.9) but was not statistically significant. This appears to reflect the recent emphasis on fathering with men able to feel more comfortable caring for children than doing the cleaning, cooking, and laundering. Time with children is also more rewarding and challenging than the routine household maintenance tasks.

Nearly 3/4 of the single person households (19% of the respondents) were headed by women reflecting the situation encountered in the general population. Single person households were significantly different from two person households on all 8 activities. More time was spent on cleaning, cooking, finance, laundry, and parental care by the person alone leaving less time to spend on a career. Clearly the person with a partner had someone else to share the household tasks. Nearly half of those alone reported an average of 6 hours per week on children's

activities which indicates these children are either grown or residing with the other parent.

One career families were indicated by the 85 respondents who noted their spouse as retired or a homemaker. This spouse spent much more time on household responsibilities than other working spouses. The data suggest that when child care is needed the male respondents' wife does so while the female respondent is more likely to hire child care help. The women are also less likely to be married or to have young children.

Implications

Educators seem little different from the general population as to sex role expectations with working women spending more hours on household responsibilities than working men. Since both genders spend approximately the same time on their careers, women are working longer work weeks. It is not surprising that these same women had indicated insufficient time and child care as barriers to career advancement (Pavan, 1986). Also not surprising is that female administrative incumbents are less likely to have children under 18 than their male counterparts.

One might therefore conclude that the issue is time or who does what. Time is a fixed commodity so the only solution is an arrangement whereby others take over certain tasks. Attitudinal change relating to sex role expectations is required before household responsibilities will be shared on an equal basis by the genders. Education and media presentations might assist in attitudinal change. While the Bill Cosby Show has both spouses

having professional careers while sharing cooking and child care, the less glamorous household tasks of cleaning and laundering seem to accomplished by a band of invisible workers. Showing a paid employee doing these tasks, might encourage more two career couples to do so.

School districts should reduce the time problems of women and thereby provide more equitable opportunities for women to become school administrators by actions in three areas: curricular, service provision, and job restructuring. All materials purchased for usage in the school district (and those presently in use) should be carefully checked for inclusion of sex role stereotypes. All activities in the schools should be monitored for possible sex role assignment. Are different activities assigned to boys and girls? In this way, the school may begin to change sex role stereotypes.

Most important school districts should provide child care to all district workers and students who need it. The child care should be in conjunction with the training of older students for parenting. If a district is too small to do so alone, it should combine with neighboring districts or with industry located within the school district. This is an excellent opportunity for a school-business partnership.

While flex time is not really workable for school districts, reduced hours or shared jobs should be available for employees. Personal leave for child care should be made available to both parents with a job guaranteed upon return to work. Policies should be changed to include days for sick child care in additional to personal illness.

Sex role stereotyping for household chores will continue until attitudes are changed and jobs are restructured to enable families to care for their children and perform the needed household tasks. At this time most women are forced into working very long hours or choosing between parenthood and career, a dilemma not faced by men.

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TABLE 1 – Number, Race, Age, Marital Status, District Size of Respondents

	Number	Black N	Black %	Average Age	Married Paired %	District Size Percentages 1	2	3	4
Supt.	161	3							
I F	13	0	0	48.15	53.8	0	9.1	90.9	0
A F	35	2	5.9	45.17	68.6	12.5	37.5	50.0	0
I M	60	0	0	48.08	91.7	0	8.8	82.5	8.8
A M	53	1	2	44.21	98.1	4.3	42.6	53.2	0
Asst. Sup.	149	7							
I F	11	2	20	48.36	63.6	20	30.0	50.0	0
A F	45	3	7	41.65	62.8	22.2	19.4	58.3	0
I M	46	0	0	46.96	93.5	4.3	41.3	54.3	0
A M	47	2	4.3	41.48	85.1	17.5	32.5	47.5	2.5
El. Pr.	171	9							
I F	51	3	6.3	45.96	72.5	37.3	17.6	43.1	2.0
A F	34	3	9.1	42.20	67.6	35.7	32.1	28.6	3.6
I M	46	1	2.3	44.71	88.9	6.7	33.3	57.8	2.2
A M	40	2	5.1	40.17	80.5	26.3	42.1	23.7	7.9
Sec. Pr.	141	16							
I F	18	6	33.3	47.89	66.7	43.8	37.5	18.8	0
A F	37	5	14.7	42.00	70.3	30.0	40.0	26.7	3.3
I M	53	4	7.8	49.69	94.3	5.9	25.5	64.7	3.9
A M	33	1	3.0	42.85	84.8	0	17.2	82.8	0
Total	622	35	5.8%	44.79	81.3	15.2	29.1	53.1	2.6

I = Incumbent F = Female
A = Aspirant M = Male

Table 2 – Children of respondents by age

	Under 6		Ages 6 – 11		Ages 12 – 17	
Supt.	N	%	N	%	N	%
I F	1	8	0	0	2	15
A F	3	9	3	9	6	17
I M	6	10	18	30	26	43
A M	7	13	17	32	22	41
Asst. Supt.						
I F	2	18	1	9	3	27
A F	6	13	5	11	7	15
I M	7	15	10	22	22	48
A M	15	32	19	40	16	34
El. Prin.						
I F	4	8	3	6	6	12
A F	5	15	7	20	6	18
I M	11	24	12	26	15	33
A M	15	37	17	37	15	37
Sec. Prin.						
I F	2	11	1	5	2	11
A F	8	22	11	30	6	16
I M	4	7	7	13	23	43
A M	7	21	11	33	16	48
Total	104	17%	143	23%	196	31%

I = Incumbent F = Female
A = Aspirant M = Male

Table 3 – Average Hours Per Week Spent By Self, Partner, and Others on Various Activities

	Self		Partner		Other	
	Hours	N	Hours	N	Hours	N
Child care	12.945	380	21.506	320	25.648	54
Clean house	3.754	471	9.105	399	7.839	124
Finance	2.545	503	2.941	375	6.524	21
Food/meals	5.089	493	7.080	415	5.086	35
Laundry	1.881	428	4.099	393	4.804	51
Outdoor chores	4.681	480	2.971	345	2.569	58
Parental care	2.297	333	2.324	244	14.615	13
Non Job Total	33.172		50.026		N/A	
Career/Job	51.700	543	36.358	372	N/A	
Total	84.872	543	86.384	415	N/A	

Table 4 - Gender Differences: Average Hours Per Week Spent By Self and Partner on Various Activities

	Hours	N	Hours	N	F	Sig.
	Women - Self		Men - Self			
Career/Job	51.1157	216	52.0856	327	1.0563	.3045
Child care	14.9105	123	12.0039	257	2.5451	.1115
Clean house	4.6263	198	3.1209	273	17.6435	.0000
Finance	2.2750	200	2.7228	303	3.1413	.0769
Food/meals	7.3472	216	3.2924	277	105.1185	0
Laundry	2.837	200	1.454	228	109.589	.000
Outdoor chores	2.172	163	5.972	317	73.444	.000
Parental care	3.656	131	1.416	202	12.675	.000
	Women - Partner		Men - Partner			
Career/Job	47.267	131	30.427	241	82.631	0
Child care	11.621	87	25.197	233	21.196	.000
Clean house	3.106	113	11.476	286	57.523	.000
Finance	3.033	122	2.898	254	.102	.750
Food/meals	4.577	123	8.134	332	27.663	.000
Laundry	1.366	101	5.045	292	109.633	.000
Outdoor chores	4.377	130	2.121	215	33.471	.000
Parental care	2.275	80	2.348	164	.008	.930

Table 5 - Marital Status Differences: Average Hours Per Week Spent By Self and Partner on Various Activities

	Hours	N	Hours	N		
	Together		Alone			
	Self		Self		F	Sig.
Career/Job	52.2078	438	49.5810	105	5.0823	.0246
Child care	13.9096	332	6.2708	48	9.0121	.0029
Clean house	3.5423	378	4.6129	93	5.6634	.0178
Finance	2.3598	403	3.2900	100	9.1221	.0027
Food/meals	4.8601	393	5.8900	100	3.6969	.0551
Laundry	1.659	334	2.670	94	12.5790	.0004
Outdoor chores	4.918	401	3.481	79	5.646	.018
Parental care	1.755	282	5.294	51	17.421	.000
	Partner					
Career/Job	36.332	355				
Child care	21.765	310				
Clean house	9.016	380				
Finance	2.975	360				
Food/meals	6.922	397				
Laundry	4.112	375				
Outdoor chores	2.945	328				
Parental care	2.207	232				